

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF
KEN WARREN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Ken Warren, on the occasion of his retirement as director of the Lakewood Library after 25 years of dedicated service to our community. In his capacity as director of the Lakewood Library, Ken worked to promote and develop innovative projects and programs hosted at the Lakewood Library and throughout the Lakewood community.

Ken Warren has maintained an enthusiasm for books and the power of the written word since his childhood. His interest in community issues began when he was a teen, as editor of an underground paper at his parochial high school. He is founding member of the Lakewood Observer and has made the publication a critical instrument of exchange of ideas and opinions on important civic and community issues.

During his tenure as director, the Lakewood Library underwent major expansions and improvements, including the complete interior and exterior renovation of the main library building, the development of a new technology center, public auditorium, a children's wing, and an inspiring display of murals that grace the walls throughout the facility. Ken has consistently reached out to the citizens, agencies and community leaders of Lakewood creating strong working relationships and friendships throughout the city. His legacy is highlighted by his unwavering advocacy and innovation in promoting and implementing literacy and learning programs, connecting the library to the public schools.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Ken Warren, whose tenure at the Lakewood Library is framed by integrity, kindness, love for learning, passion for the written word, and above all, an unbridled commitment to the betterment of the entire Lakewood community.

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1211, "Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act." I would like to thank my colleague, Congresswoman HERSETH SANDLIN, for introducing this bill, and providing leadership on this important issue.

In the wake of the recent Democratic Presidential victory, we witnessed an historic time in our electoral system. Now is the time to address the major ongoing disparities that exist for our minority and women. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton once said, "There cannot be true democracy unless women's voices are heard. There cannot be true democracy unless women are given the

opportunity to take responsibility for their own lives. There cannot be true democracy unless all citizens are able to participate fully in the lives of their country." And today, there cannot be true democracy unless women receive the same care and treatment in the military as their male counterparts. In addition to the health care reform debate, H.R. 1211 "Women's Veterans Health Care Improvement Act" will be an essential piece to the health care reform bill.

As the 111th Congress and 44th President of the United States undergo swift actions to reform our health care system it's important we get reform right! It will be a long-term problem if we don't implement the right kind of change now, which needs to include all Americans of every race, every gender, and in every condition. Without comprehensive reform, our government will have failed to serve our people in a time when the people elected for change.

This legislation will expand and improve health care services available to women veterans, especially those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to: (1) study barriers encountered by women veterans to the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of comprehensive health care; (2) assess all health care services and programs provided by the VA for women veterans; (3) provide graduate education, training and certification for mental health professionals who provide counseling, care, and services to women veterans suffering from sexual trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and (4) carry out a pilot program of child care for certain women veterans receiving health care from VA facilities.

For 19 out of the past 22 fiscal years, appropriated funds for medical care were not provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the commencement of its new fiscal year, causing the Department great challenges in planning and managing care for enrolled veterans.

By providing the access and care for women in the military, we will meet the vital obligation to provide health care to all veterans. Congress must take action in ensuring our veterans who return home sick, injured, or even healthy will receive the quality health care they deserve. As acts in an unprecedented time, I urge my colleagues to set aside the bickering and come together on a united front to ensure all of our citizen's happiness in a quality health care system. Only then can we live out the true meaning of our country, democracy.

RECOGNIZING BLACK EUROPEAN SUMMIT: TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL INCLUSION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution recognizing the first "Black European Summit: Transatlantic Dialogue on Political Inclusion" and ensuing Brussels Declaration.

The Black European Summit (BES) was held in Brussels, Belgium at the European Parliament on April 15th and 16th. The historic 2-day Summit brought together political and intellectual minority leaders from the United States and Europe to exchange information on the roles of racial and ethnic minority policy-makers in developing and supporting policies and initiatives to address racism, discrimination, and inequality.

The event was hosted and organized by myself, Harlem Desir, Member of the European Parliament; Joe Frans, President of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and a former Swedish Parliamentarian; Claude Moraes, Member of the European Parliament and President of the European Parliament All Party Group on Anti-Racism and Diversity; and Glyn Ford, former Member of the European Parliament.

Participants included Parliamentarians, Congressional representatives, local and nationally elected officials, academics, representatives from European and international institutions, civil society, the private sector, and media from Black and other minority backgrounds.

During the Summit we exchanged information and best practices on addressing structural barriers that impact minority political participation, including implementing initiatives that address racism and discrimination.

Like in the United States, it was noted that despite the numerous contributions of minorities to European society, minorities still face the daily challenges of racism and discrimination. This includes being the targets of violent hate crimes, many of which in recent years have resulted in death. Existing inequalities in education, housing, and employment remain a problem and racial profiling is often a norm. Obstacles for addressing these problems, include the lack of minorities in leadership positions and the rise of racist and xenophobic political parties seeking to implement non-inclusive policies.

Summit participants committed to addressing these issues by adopting the Brussels Declaration, which calls for: (1) concrete action to assist ethnic and racial minorities in obtaining full access to participation in the political sphere and relevant areas of decision making, especially in the development and implementation of policy initiatives to address racial and ethnic discrimination and inequality; and (2) to support future opportunities to exchange and share perspectives in these areas through a sustained transatlantic dialogue.

As I continue to work on these initiatives, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this Resolution Recognizing both the Black European Summit and Brussels Declaration and encourage them to review the statements and submissions from the Helsinki Commission's Black Europe and Racism in the 21st Century Hearings at www.csce.gov and recently introduced Resolution on Black Europeans. Additionally, I would like to submit the following background materials on the Brussels Declaration and Black Europeans for the official record.

BLACK EUROPEAN SUMMIT—TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL INCLUSION BRUSSELS DECLARATION

Preamble

We, as members of the public, private, and voluntary sectors from Europe and the United States of America convening in Brussels, Belgium from the 15 to 16 of April for